

Cal eConnect FAQs

April 2010

What is Cal eConnect?

Cal eConnect is a new independent, non-profit, public-private entity corporation that the State of California designated to provide leadership and oversee a collaborative process for developing and supporting health information exchange (HIE) policies and services in California.

Cal eConnect will establish ground rules by which health information can be exchanged appropriately among clinicians, hospitals, health plans, patients, and government agencies such as public health. It also will oversee and manage implementation of HIE services throughout the state under a federal grant California received as part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA).

Cal eConnect's objective is to ensure that eligible hospitals and providers have access to HIE services so they can take full advantage of the electronic health record (EHR) incentive program under ARRA. At least \$3 billion in enhanced Medi-Cal and Medicare payments are expected to be available in the years ahead for thousands of eligible California providers and hospitals that demonstrate using EHRs in a meaningful way. Underserved and vulnerable populations and the eligible providers and hospitals that care for them are a priority.

What is the vision for Cal eConnect?

Health care built on a solid foundation of health information exchange that provides safe and secure patient and provider access to personal and population health information, dramatically improving the health and wellbeing, safety, efficiency, and quality of care for all Californians.

How was Cal eConnect chosen?

The new entity was formed as a result of a joint proposal presented to the state by leaders from two California non-profit HIE organizations -- CalRHIO (www.calrhio.org) and the California eHealth Collaborative (CAeHC) (www.caehc.org) -- in response to a Request for Information (RFI) published by California Health and Human Services (CHHS) August 29, 2009.

Of seven proposals received by the state, CalRHIO and CAeHC scored significantly higher than the others, but neither met all of the state's criteria. In November, after detailed discussions with both organizations, they were asked to explore submitting a joint proposal. Following a facilitated process with CHHS, the organizations submitted a proposal for the new entity to be led by Board members from both organizations.

According to CHHS Deputy Secretary Jonah Frohlich, the joint proposal from the two entities is a good result for California. "We believe a team of representatives from the state's two leading health information technology organizations, as well as a diverse group of public and private board members, will best be able to advance the secure

exchange of health information in our state,” he said.

What is the makeup of Cal eConnect’s Board of Directors?

The Board of Cal eConnect is co-chaired initially by Don Crane, CEO, California Association of Physician Groups (CAPG) and David Lansky, CEO, Pacific Business Group on Health (PBGH).

Consistent with state law (SB 337 – Alquist), 22 Board members will be selected from state government, private hospitals, public hospitals, medical groups, independent physicians, employers, private health plans, public health plans, consumers, health information exchange organizations, labor organizations, community clinics, and informatics.

Cal eConnect’s diverse stakeholder board, including significant representation from the safety net and consumers, is intended to ensure that the needs of all constituents are heard and addressed. To promote transparency in decision-making, Board meetings will be open and meeting proceedings will be published online.

Board members selected to date are:

| Stakeholder Group | Elected Member | Organization |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|---|
| Co-Chair - at large | David Lansky | Pacific Business Group on Health (PBGH) |
| Co-Chair - at large | Don Crane | California Association of Physician Groups (CAPG) |
| Consumer | Marge Ginsburg | Center for Healthcare Decisions |
| HIE Organization | Bill Beighe | Santa Cruz HIE |
| Health Plan - public | Howard Kahn | LA Care |
| Health Plan - private | David Joyner | Blue Shield of California |
| Hospital - public | Ron Jimenez, MD | Santa Clara Valley Health and Hospital System |
| Hospital - private | Tom Priselac | Cedars-Sinai |
| Physician - Independent | Brennan Cassidy, MD | California Medical Association (CMA) |
| Safety net clinic | Ralph Silber | Alameda Health Consortium |

How is Cal eConnect funded?

Cal eConnect will be funded as part of the federal government’s State HIE Cooperative Agreement Program. California received a \$38.8 million award February 12, 2010, contingent upon meeting specific milestones. Cal eConnect will govern and carry out the goals of the four-year cooperative agreement via a grant agreement with the state.

To get underway, Cal eConnect received a 90-day planning grant from the state to develop the organizational infrastructure and perform the intensive planning required to carry out the long-term project.

Over the next six months, the state will transition responsibilities to Cal eConnect enabling it to fully establish itself and develop policies and procedures to take on complete responsibility for the grant and supporting activities.

What is Cal eConnect focused on in the short term?

Between now and the end of June, Cal eConnect will translate the HIE Operational Plan submitted to the Office of the National Coordinator (ONC) into a detailed Implementation Plan. The Operational Plan is the result of thousands of hours volunteered by stakeholders all over California who participated in numerous work groups and meetings and provided feedback.

The Implementation Plan will include specific tasks and resources required to carry out the Operational Plan's recommendations and execute Cal eConnect's strategy. Deliverables include a detailed work plan, business model, initial communications plan, and governance policies and procedures.